

revelation. The very reasons which made Juvenal hate it most are its best justification to a modern mind. It gave hope of a future to the slave. By creating a free industrial class it helped to break down the cramped social ideal of the slave owner and the soldier. It planted in every municipality a vigorous mercantile class, who were often excellent and generous citizens. Above all, it asserted the dignity of man." ¹ But for the freedmen the society seems to have contained but two classes, — " a small class of immensely wealthy people, and an almost starving proletariat." ²

292. The freedmen in the state. Every despot needs ministers. The history of all despotisms shows that they find those best suited to their purpose in persons of humble rank. They can use such ministers against nobles or other great men, and can command their complete loyalty. Julius Caesar made some of his freedmen officers of the mint. It was simply an extension of the usage of aristocratic households. The emperor employed freedmen to write letters and administer the finances of the empire as he would have used them to manage his private estate. " Under Caligula, Claudius, and Nero, the imperial freedmen attained their greatest ascendancy. Callistus, Narcissus, and Pallas rose to the rank of great ministers, and, in the reign of Claudius, were practically masters of the world. They accumulated enormous wealth by abusing their power, and making a traffic in civic rights, in places', or pardons." ³ The freedmen favorites carried the evil effects of slavery on character to another stage and were agents of the corruption of the new form of the state by the inheritance of slavery. " The

women of the freedmen class, for generations,
wielded, in their
own way, a power which sometimes rivaled that of
the men."
They often had great charms of person and
mind. "Their
morals were the result of an uncertain social
position, combined
with personal attractions, and education." Some
of them did
great mischief. Panthea, mistress of Lucius Verus,
is celebrated
as one of the most beautiful women who ever lived.
She had a
lovely voice, was fond of music - and poetry, and
had a very

¹ Dill, *Nero to M. Aurel*, 105. ² *Ibid.*, 94. ³ *Ibid.*,
106.